

ORC 1986

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21 JUL 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, DDP

SUBJECT: Flight Clearance Procedures For A-12

1. Flight clearance procedures for the A-12 must support the following security principles to the fullest possible extent:

- a. The existence of the A-12 must be kept secret as long as possible.
- b. Once the existence of the A-12 is known, its true performance capability must be concealed.

2. It can be expected that at the onset of the A-12 flight testing program, public knowledge of the vehicle existence becomes imminent. The proposed cover story plausibly explains the hardware existence, but how can knowledge of the aircraft's true performance be restricted? Excepting initial test flights which can be confined to [REDACTED] proximity, the A-12 will be flying cross country in controlled airspace which will normally require prior FAA clearance. Basic information which is required for clearance purposes (route, ETE, TAS) will readily reveal aircraft speed and endurance. (Altitude capability could be misrepresented and so concealed)

3. An approach to preventing the compromise of vehicle performance is to fly all sorties without normal FAA flight approval. However, several disadvantages accrue from flying unfiled and uncleared.

- a. No flight following capability. Precise aircraft position and status would be known only when flying in the local area.

- b. Control area and air defense radars would probably track the A-12 during a portion of its flight. Careful flight planning to circumnavigate or avoid these radars may minimize this disadvantage, however, it must be assumed that tracking will occur. This radar tracking would compromise aircraft performance unless effective radar suppression procedures are implemented.

4. Assuming that procedures are developed and implemented which will provide for uncleared and undetected flight by the primary aircraft, what of the KC-135? Tanker flights, operating at mid range altitudes, often under IFR conditions enroute to and from the refueling area will have to file and cleared by FAA. Will the repeated filing of a KC-135 to a refueling area arouse suspicion without a corresponding receiver aircraft flight plan to the same refueling area.

5. It is recommended that project cleared personnel in FAA and NORAD be contacted for guidance in the resolution of this problem.

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Chief, Special Projects Branch, DPD

CONCUR:

OK - provided we check with Col. Geary. Any flight plan which requires reporting is sure to indicate speed capability. Maybe all we need is no RAD suppression and emergency procedure SOP.

STANLEY W. BEERLI
Colonel USAF
Acting Chief, DPD

SWB

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